



An assessment of the business education skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition in Lagos State

Ogunkelu O Maria¹, Njoku Chiso Anslem², Onipede J Oludolapo³, Olalekan S Alaba⁴

^{1,3-4} School of Vocational and Technical Education, Yaba College of Education, Lagos, Nigeria

² Department of Industrial Technical Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka, Nigeria

Abstract

The study assessed the business education skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition in Lagos State. Four research questions guided the study and survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study consisted of 40 registered business men and women, operating a business in Aspamda Trade Faire in Lagos State, who were purposively sampled. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire which was faced validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was established by using Cronbach Alpha reliability method to obtain the reliability coefficient of 0.86. A total of 40 copies of the questionnaire were administered and retrieved showing 100% response rate. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The study revealed that the business education skills required by technical vocational education and training students in technical colleges in Lagos State includes: managerial skills, Information and Technology skills, accounting skills and marketing skills. Based on the findings, recommendation were made among which are that modern equipment/tools found in the industries should be made available for the teaching of skills in the school workshop and that the Government should provide a takeoff grant to every apprentice that completes stipulated training to acquire skills in motor vehicle trade in Osun State, it also recommended that the identified skills should be packed and inculcated into the curriculum of automobile technology in technical colleges in Osun State among others.

Keywords: business education skills, technical, vocational, Lagos state

Introduction

The high rate of unemployment coupled with the mismatch of skill between what is obtainable in the labour market and what the school offers has placed a demand on policy makers and the +administrators of technical vocational education and training to assess the business education skills possess by the students in technical colleges since business education program are designed to provide students with the basic theories of management and production which cut across all disciplines in technical vocational education and training.

Assessment according to Gardiner (2012)^[8] provides faculty members, administrators, trustees, and others with evidence, numerical or otherwise, from which they can develop useful information about their students, institutions, programs and courses. Tara (2005) is also of the opinion that evaluation helps teachers to make a judgment about the level of skills or knowledge acquired. Evaluation is also used to measure improvement over time, to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of the students, to rank them for selection or exclusion, or to motivate them (Wojtczak, 2002)^[24]. Marshal (2005)^[11] states that assessment includes gathering and interpreting information about a student's performance to determine his/her mastery toward pre-determined learning objectives or standards. Typically, results of tests, assignments, and other learning tasks provide the necessary performance data. This data can help the teacher to determine the effectiveness of instructional program at school, classroom, and individual student levels. Assessment of business education skills possessed by

vocational and technical education students from technical colleges is based on the principle that the more clearly and specifically you understand how students are learning, the more efficiently you can teach them business education.

The term Business Education has been given a variety of meanings depending on the perspective from which it is seen. Business Education is defined as a form of instruction that directly and indirectly prepares the businessman for his calling. Odunaike and Amoda (2013)^[13] in Osuala (2003)^[20] defined Business Education as a type of training which, while playing its part in the achievement of the general aims of education on any given level, has its primary objective as the preparation of people to enter into a career, to render efficient service and to advance from their present level of employment to higher levels. It also affords every individual an opportunity to develop the skills, abilities and understanding that will enable him to handle competently his personal business affairs; to develop an understanding of the vocational opportunity available in the broad field of business and to assume his citizenship responsibilities. Nwaigburu and Eneogwe (2013)^[12], defined Business Education as being a dynamic field of study which transformed the educational system into the educational system to one which aims at grooming manpower to fill the over growing vacuum created by unemployment. Nwaigburu and Eneogwe (2013)^[12] went further to say that it is alarming to know that graduate unemployment cuts across all disciplines in the country. It is however, impossible to identify an academic field that is not adequately represented in the ever growing community of

unemployed graduates that are unemployable. Nwaigburu and Eneogwe (2013)^[12] in Orim, Olayi and Ewa (2009)^[18], opined that training in school is at variance with what labour market requires. This is because, there is a mismatch between school training and the realities in productive life in the job seeking world. The graduates concerned may not have been adequately trained by their institutions to become employable or self-reliant in terms of starting their own small or medium scale businesses and this defeats the aim and objectives of technical vocational education and training.

The aim of business skill is to inculcate in the young people the need to see business opportunities, ideas and act on them promptly in order to take advantage over others. However, this should not stop at imparting knowledge alone but, ability to teach skills acquisition in various disciplines of study that a potential businessman might require, such as managerial skills, financial competencies, accounting skills, marketing and general business competencies. Business Education is one of that embraces skill building programme, creative thinking, productive development, marketing negotiation, leadership training and health generation (Kurato, 2003)^[10]. However, Gana (2008)^[7] looks at Business as the willingness, and the abilities of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and able to establish an enterprise successfully, based on the identified opportunities. Business skill is also the creation of an innovative, economic organization for the purpose of growth under conditions of risks and uncertainties (Dollinger, 2005)^[3]. It is a clear manifestation of effective manipulation of human intelligence as demonstrated in creative performance through technical vocational education and training.

TVET refers to deliberate interventions to bring about learning which would make people more productive (or simply adequately productive) in designated areas of economic activity such as economic sectors, occupations, specific work tasks (Okwelle 2013)^[16]. Alhasan and Abdullahi (2013)^[1], opined that technical and vocational education and training plays an essential role in improving the wellbeing of youths and communities and increases productivity, empowers individual to become self-reliant and stimulates entrepreneurship. UNESCO, (2010)^[22] defined TVET as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupants in various sectors of economic and social life. Cedefop (2008)^[6], stated that TVET includes vocational education and training carried out before entering working life and the education or training that comes in after entry into working life and aims to help people to (a) improve or update their knowledge and/or skills; (b) acquire new skills for a career move or retraining; and (c) continue their personal or professional development. Thus TVET is all embracing comprehensive education and training program, involving lifelong learning, responsible citizenship, and the promotion of sustainable economic development and social transformation. Uwaifo (2010)^[23] described TVET as that training of technically oriented personnel who are to be the initiators, facilitators and implementers of technological

development of a nation by building adequately training its citizenry and the need to be technologically literate, leading to self-reliance and sustainability. TVET thus equips people not only with vocational and technical skills, but with a broad range of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are now recognized as indispensable for meaningful participation in work and life. It entails the enrichment of the capabilities that influence the effective psychomotor or cognitive domains of individual in readiness for entry into the world of work in order to satisfy their intrinsic and extrinsic needs, values, work and aspirations such that local and national needs would be met (Okwelle and Deebom, 2017)^[17]. It should be noted that one of the main objectives of TVET is to train and inculcate the students for global competition.

With technology advancing so fast and international trade expanding, businesses are incentivized to sell products and services in foreign markets. As such, operating a business on a global level helps enterprises expand their market share, reduce costs and become more competitive. In present business environment, there are many issues such as unemployment which is increasing, coupled with profits which is dwindling and cost which are increasing at a geometrical progression. To resolve these problems, one alternative is to focus on becoming globally competitive. Global competitiveness according to Civil Service India (2018)^[25], is an ability of nation to provide quality products and services at competitive prices thereby providing adequate returns. Competitiveness is the comparative concept of the ability and performance of a firm, sub-sector or a country. For the graduates of TVET to remain relevant in this globally competitive environment so as to set up business and also run one effectively, they need to possess business education skills. Technical Vocational education and training at the technical college level is designed to turn out knowledgeable and skillful graduates who will become job creators and not only job seekers. It is therefore, surprising and at the same time disappointing that many of them are roaming the street with curriculum vitae in search of scanty employment opportunities because they appear not to adequately possess business education skills for self-employment. The situation now is that most TVET graduates make little or no attempt to established small scale business of their own despite the abundant business opportunities in the country. Instead, they continue to besiege ministries and government offices in search of jobs that are either extremely few in supply or even non-existent. Those that have even established one cannot even manage it effectively. The question now is what are the business education skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition? This paper therefore aimed at assessing of the business education skills needed by technical colleges vocational and technical education students for global competition in Lagos State.

Research Questions

1. What are the managerial skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition in Lagos State?
2. What are the information technology skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition in Lagos State?

3. What are the accounting skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition in Lagos State?
4. What are the marketing skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition in Lagos State?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Nworgu (2015) stated that a survey research design typically employs interview and questionnaire to determine the opinions, preferences, attitudes and perceptions of peoples about issues. The population of the study consisted of 40 registered business men and women, operating a business in Aspadma Trade Faire in Lagos. Lagos state was chosen and also Aspadma because of the business men and women reside there and also sells goods in wholesales to others in other parts of the country. No sample was taken considering the small and manageable size of the population; hence the entire population was used. A structured questionnaire designed by the researcher and called needed business education skills required by technical vocational education and training student’s questionnaire was used to gather data for the study. These instruments was designed in accordance with the independent and dependent variables in the study. The items used a 5-point Likert scale of highly agreed,

agreed, undecided, disagreed and highly disagreed, which were assigned numerical values of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by two teachers of business education in technical colleges in Lagos State and also one expert from one registered business company that involves in import export and also distribution of goods to wholesalers coin Lagos State. These business experts assessed the quality and relevance of the items including clarity, appropriateness and sufficiency of the instrument. Their inputs, suggestions and corrections led to the final modification of the instrument for the study. The instrument was trial tested on 15 graduates of technical vocation and training graduates who have a registered company in Idumota area also in Lagos State and this yielded a reliability co-efficiency of 0.86 using the Cronbach Alpha formula.

Fourty copies of the questionnaires were distributed to the registered business men and women in Aspadma. Fourty copies of the questionnaires were returned yielding a 100% return rate. The data were collected by administering the questionnaire directly on the respondents by the researchers and two research assistants. The data collected from this study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation in answering the research questions. Any item with a mean value of 3.50 and above was regarded as agreed while any item with a mean below 3.50 was regarded as not agreed.

Table 1: Research question one: What are the managerial skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition in Lagos State?

| S/N | Item Description | X | SD | Remarks |
|-----|--|------|------|---------|
| 1. | Leadership skills. | 3.66 | 0.70 | Agreed |
| 2. | Time management skills. | 3.65 | 0.46 | Agreed |
| 3. | Coordinating skills. | 3.90 | 0.76 | Agreed |
| 4. | Problem solving skills | 3.92 | 0.88 | Agreed |
| 5. | Good communication skills | 4.21 | 0.28 | Agreed |
| 6. | Skills in dealing with changes effectively | 4.03 | 0.32 | Agreed |
| 7. | Sense of objectives and direction | 3.82 | 0.74 | Agreed |
| 8. | Planning skills. | 4.00 | 0.68 | Agreed |
| 9. | Decision making skills. | 4.08 | 0.79 | Agreed |
| 10. | Delegation of authority and responsibility skills. | 4.32 | 0.78 | Agreed |

Table 1 showed that all the 10 items on the managerial skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition had their mean values ranged from 3.66 to 4.32 which were above the cutoff point of 3.50. The standard deviation indicates that the responses do not vary widely from the mean.

Table 2: Research question two: What are the Information and Technology skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition in Lagos State?

| S/N | Item Description | X | SD | Remarks |
|-----|--|------|------|---------|
| 1. | Skills in using the email effectively. | 4.21 | 0.28 | Agreed |
| 2. | Skills in using excel for production calculation. | 3.75 | 0.84 | Agreed |
| 3. | Skills in storing and retrieving document effectively from the computer. | 3.94 | 0.73 | Agreed |
| 4. | Skills in using Microsoft word and PowerPoint effectively | 4.25 | 0.52 | Agreed |
| 5. | Skills in installing computer software and programmes. | 3.72 | 0.73 | Agreed |
| 6. | Skills in uploading information to the internet | 3.71 | 0.74 | Agreed |
| 7. | Skills in protecting a document with password. | 3.92 | 0.45 | Agreed |
| 8. | Skills in creating product awareness using the internet | 4.08 | 0.62 | Agreed |
| 9. | Skills in printing and scanning a documents. | 4.25 | 0.64 | Agreed |
| 10. | Basic image editing skills. | 4.32 | 0.52 | Agreed |

Table 2 showed that all the 10 items on the Information and Technology skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition had their mean values ranged from 3.71 to 4.32 which were

above the cutoff point of 3.50. The standard deviation indicates that the responses do not vary widely from the mean.

Table 3: Research question three: What are the accounting skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition in Lagos State?

| S/N | Item Description | X | SD | Remarks |
|-----|--|------|------|---------|
| 1. | Book keeping skills. | 4.31 | 0.78 | Agreed |
| 2. | Ability to understand payroll and various deductions skills. | 4.08 | 0.79 | Agreed |
| 3. | Financial Reporting Skills. | 3.66 | 0.70 | Agreed |
| 4. | Peachtree Accounting Skills. | 3.65 | 0.46 | Agreed |
| 5. | Skills in determining labour cost. | 3.82 | 0.74 | Agreed |
| 6. | Simple budgeting skills | 4.03 | 0.32 | Agreed |
| 7. | Skills in keeping the return inwards and outwards account. | 4.03 | 0.32 | Agreed |
| 8. | Skills in keeping the sales invoice and purchase invoice. | 4.25 | 0.52 | Agreed |
| 9. | Journal Entry Preparation/Posting Skills. | 4.08 | 0.79 | Agreed |
| 10. | Debt Management Skills. | 3.72 | 0.73 | Agreed |

Table 3 showed that all the 10 items on the Information and Technology skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition had their mean values ranged from 3.65 to 4.31 which were

above the cutoff point of 3.50. The standard deviation indicates that the responses do not vary widely from the mean.

Table 4: Research question four: What are the Marketing Skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition in Lagos State?

| S/N | Item Description | X | SD | Remarks |
|-----|---|------|------|---------|
| 1. | Communication skills. | 4.00 | 0.44 | Agreed |
| 2. | Networking skills. | 3.65 | 0.46 | Agreed |
| 3. | Skills in responding to brands threat. | 3.77 | 0.48 | Agreed |
| 4. | Skills in conducting market research | 3.97 | 0.36 | Agreed |
| 5. | Skills in conducting SWOT analysis. | 4.02 | 0.63 | Agreed |
| 6. | Skills in conforming to delivery deadline. | 4.15 | 0.54 | Agreed |
| 7. | Skills in brainstorming themes for advertisement | 4.08 | 0.66 | Agreed |
| 8. | Skills in analyzing consumer demographics preference. | 4.00 | 0.88 | Agreed |
| 9. | Skills in analyzing consumer survey data. | 4.25 | 0.52 | Agreed |
| 10. | Skills in carrying out online marketing. | 3.72 | 0.73 | Agreed |

Table 4 showed that all the 10 items on the Marketing skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition had their mean values ranged from 3.65 to 4.25 which were above the cutoff point of 3.50. The standard deviation indicates that the responses do not vary widely from the mean.

Discussion of the Result

The study in table 1 identified 10 managerial skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition among which leadership skills, Time Management skills, Coordinating Skills, Good communication skills and Sense of objectives and direction. This is in agreement with Eze and Ezeh (2011) [4] who stated that that managerial skills include adopting basic steps in starting a business, delegate authority and monitor performance, determine risks and risk management, among others. This is also in agreement with Anthony (2016) [2] who stated that managerial skills includes: Personal Drive, Excellent Human Relation, Superb Communication Ability, Technical Knowledge, Persistence, Innovative Capacity and Adaptability. In addition, Osbourne (2000) [19] is also of the agreement that managerial skills are the various steps needed by an entrepreneur to mobilize men, money, machine, material and financial resources in order to produce new products.

The findings of the study in table 2 showed 10 Information and Technology skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition. These Information and Technology skills includes: Skills in protecting a document with password, Skills in using Microsoft word and PowerPoint effectively,

Skills in installing computer software and programmes and Skills in uploading information to the internet among others. This is in agreement with Ojukwu and Ojukwu (2002) [14] who stated that that ICT skills should include; word processing skills such as formatting editing keyboarding, ability to use scanning machines, to select reproduction activities. This is also in agreement with Owa (2005) [21] who outlined some information and communication skills to include: email, newsgroup/tele-collaborating, computer aided telephoning, world wide web, surfing the net, file sharing and topic sharing and video conferencing devices within a network, refreshing and saving a web page, downloading information from the internet and uploading information into the internet.

The findings of the study in table 3 showed 10 Accounting skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition. These Accounting Skills includes: Book keeping skills, Ability to understand payroll and various deductions skills, Financial Reporting Skills and Peachtree Accounting Skills among others. This is in agreement with Eze, Ezenwafor and Igberaharha (2016) [5] who stated that accounting is an area of study that equips recipients with knowledge, skills and attitude necessary for efficient financial calculation required for occupational competence, and economic activities of an organization. Eze, Ezenwafor and Igberaharha went further to say that accounting skills are the totality of skills ranging from record keeping; financial management and reporting skills that are expected to promote effective financial management of any business enterprise. This is also in agreement with Anthony (2016) [2] who stated that accounting skills includes skills in handling accounting

operations such as ledger accounts, cash books and banking operations.

The findings of the study in table 4 showed 10 Marketing skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition. These Marketing Skills includes: Communication Skills, Networking Skills, Skills in responding to brands threat and Skills in conducting SWOT analysis among others. This is in agreement Okpan (2006)^[15] who identified marketing skills as: ability to capture and retain customers, ability to promote and sell the organizational product, ability to analyse demand and supply situations and ability to acquire effective sales habits among others. This is also in agreement with Kotler and Keller (2010)^[9] who stated that marketing is meeting consumers' needs profitably and satisfying them by communicating marketing ideas to the consumers.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to assess the business education skills needed by technical college vocational and technical education students for global competition in Lagos State. The study identified the managerial skills, information and technology skills, accounting skills and marketing skills that are needed for global competition in industry. The finding here will help both the TVET Management in taking some vital decisions in improving the business skills needed by the study for global competition and also the respondents to get improved skill training in the areas identified.

Recommendation

1. TVET students should endeavour to acquaint themselves with all the relevant business skills necessary for them to create, and maintain their customers' needs;
2. The findings of this study should also be made available to technical vocational and training teachers in technical colleges as a training manual;
3. There is also need for a collaborative relationship between professional businessmen/women and TVET teachers in technical colleges to ensure a proper dissemination of business competencies to students for effective business experience upon graduation.

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